

MINUTES

OF THE

Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting

OF THE

ZION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

HELD WITH THE

Macedonia Baptist Church,

Sept. 16th to 18th inclusive, 1871.

OFFICERS :

J. L. JENNINGS, MODERATOR,
J. P. THOMPSON, CLERK.

COFFEEVILLE;

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THE MISSISSIPPI TIMES OFFICE,

1871.

MINUTES.

MACCEDONIA CHURCH, CALHOUN COUNTY, Sept. 16th,
The Messengers from the churches composing the Zion B
Association convened with the Macedonia Baptist church
houn county, Miss., at II o'clock on Saturday before the
Sabbath in September, 1871.

The introductory sermon was preached by the appointe
der J T Fox. Text, 1st Peter 2, 9, "but ye are a chosen g
tion, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; th
should show forth the praises of him who have called you
darkness into his marvelous light."

After an hour's intermission, the Delegates assembled
house. A hymn was sung, and the Moderator of the last s
G L Jennings, offered prayer.

The annual letters from the churches were read by D E
cer and T N Ross and the names of their messengers enrol
follows:

- Antioch*—J M Dalton, O Roggers, and A M George,
- Bethel*—W P Cook, W M Martin, J J May.
- Bethany*—J T Fox, T H Wilson, M C Allen.
- Concord*—G Swindle, H Burton.
- Bluff Spring*—B Watson, Elbert Stricklen.
- Double Spring*—A Price, H H Kimbrid.
- Fellowship*—W T Hicks, G W Berryhill,
- Friendship*—J Easley, A Davis, B Landrith.
- Greensboro*—F B Campbell.
- Harmony*—E Britt.
- Hebron*—A H Conner, Eli Stewart.
- Hopewell*—Letter.
- Mulberry*—H Hightower, T J Morris.
- Mt Pleasant*—J P Wofford, S G Hunter, T N Ross.
- Midway*—N E Gardner, M K Gilder, W N Moore.
- Mt Zion*—A H Bays.
- Macedonia*—J W Powell, J R Johnson, A Langston.
- Mt Mariah*—B Davis.
- Mt Vernon*—Wm Carroll, Z McCain.
- Mt Comfort*—S Wilkins, J Ritch.
- Monpelier*—W J Howe.
- Milligan Springs*—T Lusk, E Eiland.
- Oats Grove*—C E Murphree, J A Craze.
- Philadelphia*—J T Moore, Wm Moore, J N Patterson.
- Pittsboro*—C G Blount, W T Blount, A D Sheffield.
- Pleasant Grove*—(Grenada county) D C Lee, F A Martin.
- M Ringo*.
- Pleasant Grove*—(Chickasaw), G L Jennings, N B Crawf.
- G W Naron*.
- Pleasant Grove*—(Montgomery); J P Thompson, A Bruns.
- Pleasant Hill*—W J Green, W M Dill, G Shepard.
- Pleasant Ridge*—J Sanders, W A Johnson, J Wilkins.
- Poplar Springs*—G W Murff, F J Stribbling.
- Prairie Creek*—J H Powell.

Providence—A Woodard.

Rocky Mount—L Murphree, M C Stribling, A Henderson.

Shiloh—(Montgomery county); J W Kirk, C A West.

Shiloh—(Calhoun county); G B Jones, J C Martin.

Spring Creek—W M High.

Spring Hill—D E Spencer, J Eidson, J S Burns.

Wake Forest—J T Barton, A E Kolb.

Proceeded to the election of officers. J L Jennings and Lyon were appointed tellers, who reported G L Jennings Moderator and J P Thompson Clerk. The Moderator, on resuming the chair, made some appropriate remarks, and declared the body duly organized, and ready for business.

Petitionary letters were called for; whereupon Antioch of Chickasaw, Hebion of Choctaw, Shiloh of Calhoun, and Pleasant Grove of Grenada counties; all newly constituted churches; presented such; they were received, the hand of fellowship, and an invitation to all the privileges of the body extended to their messengers, by the Moderator, and their names enrolled.

Messengers Received From Corresponding Bodies.

From Yallobusha Association—J L Jennings.

From Aberdeen Association—Elder D W Hardin.

The following committees were appointed by the Moderator:

On Preaching—G W Naron, J W Kirk, G W Murff, with Deacons and Pastor of Macedonia church.

On Ministerial Education—J T Fox, C G Blount. On motion the clerk was made chairman of said committee.

On Order of Business—G W Berryhill, S G Hunter, A H Conner

On Finance—H Hightower, M Burson, T N Ross.

On Nomination—F B Campbell, N E Gardner, A Woodard.

On Foreign Missions—J M Dalton, D E Spencer.

On Domestic Missions—J S Ryan, J P Wofford.

On Sabbath Schools—W T Hicks, B Watson.

The Committee on preaching made the following report: D E Spencer to preach to-night, J P Thompson to-morrow at 11 o'clock, T H Wilson, at 2 o'clock and J M Dalton at night.

On motion adjourned until Monday morning 9 o'clock.

Prayer by J P Wofford.

SABBATH EXERCISES—After spending an hour in prayer meeting, the ministers appointed for the day, addressed a large and attentive congregation. At the close of the 11 o'clock sermon a collection in favor of Missions was taken up amounting to \$24 60

MONDAY MORNING, SEPT. 17, 1871.

The Association met at 9 o'clock. Prayer by J T Fox.

The committee on the Order of Business submitted the following report, which was adopted.

1st...Renew call for Letters and Delegates.

2nd...Renew call for Correspondence.

3rd...Return correspondence.

4th...Take up Queries.

5th...Report on Ministerial Education.

- 6th...Report on Domestic Missions.
 7th...Report on Foreign " "
 8th...Report on Sabbath Schools.
 9th...Report of Executive committee.
 10th...Report on Nomination.
 11th...Report of Finance committee.
 12th...Report from District meetings.
 13th...Miscellaneous Business.

G. W. BERRYHILL, Chairman.

Elder A A Lomax, Agent for the Mississippi Baptist College, having arrived, was invited to a seat by the Moderator, and solicited to set the claim of said College before the body, which he did in a very clear and forceable style. At the close of his remarks a collection of \$18 00 was made to aid in relieving the College from its present embarrassment.

The following brethren were appointed messengers to corresponding bodies:

Aberdeen Association—J M Dalton, W T Watkins, J D Smith, J M Paton.
 Louisville Association—W D Seigler, A H Bays, B Watson.
 Columbus Association—J M Dalton, W L Cochran, G L Jennings, J P Wofford, W M Curry, A E Kolb.
 Yalobusha Association—W Martin, A E Davis, S G Hunter, J L Jennings.
 Kosciusko Association—L T Eiland, A Bruns, T Lusk, F B Campbell, A H Bays.
 Yazoo Association—T H Wilson, J P Thompson, H Hightower.
 State Convention—G L Jennings, J M Dalton, J T Fox, D E Spencer, W T Hicks, A B Hicks, J P Thompson, A Woodard.

On motion the Clerk was ordered to prepare a letter of correspondence, to the several Bodies with which we correspond, and have the same printed in the minutes.

On motion the queries sent up by Friendship church, were referred to a special committee, viz. J T Fox, F B Campbell, J W Powell, J W Kirk.

The committee on Ministerial education, made their report and after remarks from several of the brethren, urging the importance of at once educating our young Ministers, the following contributions and pledges from Brethren and churches were made, and the report adopted.

CASH.

J T Moore	\$5 00
H Kimbrid	2 00
G W Murf	1 85
F A Martin	2 00
M C Stribling	1 00
Total	\$11 85

PLEDGES FROM CHURCHES

Antioch	\$5 00
Philadelphia	5 00
Pleasant Grove (gra)	8 00
Greensboro	10 00
Pittoboro	5 00
Shiloh(cal)	10 00
Mulberry	10 00
Total	53 00

PLEDGES FROM BRETHREN.

G L Jennings \$10, B Watson \$2, J M Dalton \$5, A Davis \$2, Wm Martin \$5, J T Morris \$5, A Woodard \$5, A H Bays \$5, W Carroll \$5, Ben Powel \$2, J W Hardin \$1, A Bruns \$2, J W Kirk \$5, C West \$2, W High \$2. Total \$58, 00.

NOTE....The Association having failed to specify the time for redeeming the above pledges; we could suggest, that they be paid to any member of the Executive board, by the first of January next, and held subject to the order of the Chairman of said board.

Report on Ministerial Education.

Your committee on Ministerial Education would respectfully report: That we as an Association have three young brethren of piety and promise, who are in need of assistance in order to prosecute their studies, namely: D E Spencer, W T Hicks and A B Hicks. These brethren are dependant upon us for that assistance. They have received but little help from any other source, nor is there any probability that they will. Brother D E Spencer was compelled to leave Clinton and labor for means to enable him to prosecute his studies. That it is our duty as an association to assist them, we have admitted by our former action as a body. The amount contributed by our churches is insufficient to defray the expenses of D E Spencer, and W T Hicks. Brother A B Hicks is equally worthy and promising, and should immediately be placed at school. We therefore urge upon the churches the necessity of more liberal contributions for this object. If these brethren are continued at school, more liberality upon the part of the churches is indispensable.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. P. THOMPSON, Chairman.

The committee on Domestic Missions, made the following report which was adopted:

Report on Domestic Missions.

Your committee an Domestic Missions, beg leave to report that they have endeavored to bestow upon this subject as much consideration as their limited time would enable, and can add but little to the fund of argument and earnest appeals for greater energy and more extensive labor in the cause of Domestic Missions which have from time to time been presented in reports upon that subject to your body. All must admit that it is our duty to do all that we can to our fellow men. The word of God declares that all are lost without faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our nearest neighbor as well as the most distant pagan is embraced in this universal declaration. But in the language of an inspired Apostle, "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" It is evident then that the greatest obligation rests on us to convey to our fellow creatures the glad tidings of salvation. In conclusion, your committee would suggest, as an opinion, that if the churches would, so far sustain their Pastors as to release them from temporal cares, some portion of their time might be profitably spent in adjacent neighborhoods where the gospel is not preached, and by this means many souls brought to Christ. It is believed that most, if not all the

churches which have been recently constituted within our bounds were the result of the labors of faithful Pastors, bestowed in time justly due their families. All of which is respectfully submitted.
J. S. RYAN, Chairman.

The committee on Foreign Missions submitted the following report, which was adopted:

Report on Foreign Missions.

Your committee to whom was referred the subject of Foreign Missions beg leave to report: The success which has attended foreign Missions, as well as the display of Divine power, in directing the course of events which is to result in the final establishment of the peaceful reign of Christ in the world, marks this era as one intimately connected with the fulfillment of Prophetic events; which should arouse the deepest interest in the minds of every lover of truth and true follower of Jesus Christ. Your committee feels that every Baptist should desire to contribute their influence and means to extend the great light by which the world is to be illuminated, and the powers of darkness subdued.

The most flattering reports reach us from our foreign fields, and recent events solemnly impress us with the declaration of the Savior, "the harvest truly is great but the laborers are few."

The cry from distant lands for the bread of life makes appeals to us, which God requires us to heed. For we cannot close our eyes to the avenues that God has opened up for the introduction of the Gospel, without a criminal disregard of the obligation resting upon us set forth in the commission.

Let us brethren, with earnest solicitude, turn especially to the dominion of the Beast, and rescue from his iron grasp those deluded subjects whose conscience are bound by the edicts of that monster whose power is broken, and whose destiny is sealed, and let the cry from the watch tower be, "Come out of her my people," &c. Brethren, let us with earnest hearts fly to the rescue. Let us support our Missionaries. Let us send other laborers into the vineyard.

Your committee would urge that the claims of the Foreign Board be urgently laid before the churches of this Association, and that collections be taken up in said churches for that object, at least once a year.

Respectfully submitted.

J. M. DALTON, Chairman.

Adjourned for half an hour. Prayer by J M Dalton.

EVENING SESSION.

Reassembled. Opened by singing, and prayer offered by B. Watson.

The committee on Sabbath Schools offered the following report which was received and adopted:

REPORT ON SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Your committee on Sabbath Schools beg leave to report. We regret that from surrounding information, there is so little interest manifested on the subject of Sabbath Schools in the bounds of this Association; yet we rejoice at the rapid increase of interest in the bounds of the Southern Baptist Convention, and at their success in this great work; and we again recommend the churches of this body, to become connected with and patronize the publications of the S. S. B. of S. B. C. and to operate through the State Board, located at West Point, and thus procure pure Baptist literature. And we would urge upon Pastors especially to labor to establish a school in every church and destitute neighborhood—with the motto the children for Jesus; and that Kind Words (the child's delight) be taken in every family; and by this means bring them to Christ and forbid them not. Respectfully submitted.

B. WATSON, Chairman.

The Executive Committee on Ministerial Education submitted their report, which was adopted.

Report of Executive Committee.

We, your committee would respectfully report: That we have had Brethren D E Spencer and W T Hicks in School at Mississippi College, the greater part of the time since the last session of your body. We have received in contributions from

Churches, Members and Treasurer,.....	\$179 10
Borrowed.....	50 00

Total,.....	\$229 10
Expended,.....	224 50

Balance on hand,.....	\$4 60
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We suggest the appointment of another Executive Board, to superintend the business of Ministerial Education, and to act in concert with, and auxiliary to the Board of the B. S. Convention.

G. L. JENNINGS, Chairman.

On motion an Executive Committee on Ministerial Education was appointed, viz: J H Wilson, J M Dalton, C G Blount, J P Thompson, and on motion G L Jennings was appointed Chairman of said committee.

The committee on Nominations reported—G L Jennings to preach the introductory sermon at the next annual meeting—J P Thompson, Alternate.

Report of District meetings received and adopted:

NORTHERN DISTRICT.

The Northern District meets with the church at Pleasant Ridge (3 miles south of Sarepta), on Thursday before the first Sabbath in August, 1872. To preach the introductory sermon Elder G L Jennings, Elder C G Blount Alternate. To write on church discipline G L Jennings. On practical Godliness, C G Blount. On Justification by Faith, Elder J L Jennings. On Judas Iscariot, Elder J R Johnson. On Christian Benevolence, Brother G W Howard. On Future Rewards and Punishments, Elder W H Morris. On the Second Coming of Christ, Elder J M Dalton. On the Importance of Seeking First the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness, J L Lyon. On the Priesthood of Christ, Elder D E Spencer. On Matt. 11 chapter and 11 and 12 verses, Elder E A Crocker.

DELEGATES TO SOUTHERN DISTRICT.—Elders J M Dalton, A Price, G L Jennings, J P Wofford, D E Spencer, brethren J W Berry, S G Hunter, A E Kob, J D Cartlage.

SOUTHERN DISTRICT.

The Southern District meets with the Spring Valley church, on Friday before the fourth Sabbath in July 1872. To preach the introductory sermon Elder C J Hardin, Elder J T Fox alternate.

An Essay read by Elder J T Fox on Atonements, was requested to be spread upon the minutes of the association.

The next Association was appointed to be held with the church at Milligan Springs.

Report of Finance committee received and adopted.
We the committee on Finance beg leave to report.

Received for minutes.....	\$110 60
Received for Foreign missions.....	64 40
Received for Domestic missions.....	12 30
Received for the Ministerial Education.....	10 00
Total.....	\$197 30

H. HIGHTOWER, Chairman.

Report of queries adopted.

Your committee to whom was referred queries from Friendship church, would propose the following answers.

Query 1st. If a member marries a lady who was divorced from her husband, for any other cause than fornication or adultery, what should the church do with him?

Answer: Exclude him.

Query 2nd. Is the church justifiable under any circumstances in retaining such a brother?

Answer: Not while he is living in adultery.

Query 3rd. If a member marries such a lady, while unconverted, and professes religion, shall the church receive him, if so upon what condition?

Answer: The church should receive no member while living in adultery. A professed nor a real conversion, does not alter the law of Christ, and Baptist churches should know no other.

"Whosoever shall put away his wife except it be for fornication and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and who so marieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." All of which is submitted.

J. T. FOX, Chairman.

On motion all ministers of the Zion Association, with their Post office were noted and ordered for publication in the minutes.

The following resolutions were adopted:

RESOLVED, That the name of no delegate, hereafter, shall appear upon the roll unless he attend the whole of the session.

RESOLVED, That the Executive Committee be empowered to act as a Missionary Board; to which shall be intrusted all monies, and business relative to Missions in the bounds of this Association.

RESOLVED, That all missionary money now on hand, be paid over to the chairman of the Mission Board.

RESOLVED, In pursuance of a request from the Southern District Meeting, an Essay by J. T. Fox, on the Atonement, was read before the Association, and ordered to be printed with the minutes of this Association.

RESOLVED, That the Clerk be allowed \$15 00 for his services; that he expend the balance of the minute fund for printing minutes, &c., that they be distributed among the churches in proportion to sums contributed for same.

RESOLVED, That the office of Treasurer be dispensed with; that his election to office, and report to this Body be erased from the minutes.

The Association, through with its business, adjourned to meet with the church at Milligan Springs 6 or 8 miles south of Greensboro, on Saturday before the third Sabbath in September, 1872.

Closing prayer offered by Elder A. A. Lomax.

G. L. JENNINGS, MODERATOR.

J. P. THOMPSON, Clerk.

PREACHING DURING THE SESSION.

J T Fox, Saturday, 11 o'clock. B Watson, 2 P. M. D E Spencer at night. J P Thompson, Sabbath 11 A. M. T H Wilson, 2 P. M. J M Dalton, at night. W T Hicks, Monday A. M. A A Lomax at night.

ORDAINED MINISTERS OF ZION ASSOCIATION.

J T Fox,	Cadaretta, Miss.	C G Blount,	Pittsboro, Miss.
M C Allen,	" "	J L Jennings,	" "
T H Wilson,	" "	Jas. Johnson,	Sarepta, "
C J Hardin,	" "	John Wilkins,	" "
B Watson,	Bellefontaine "	John Sanders,	" "
A Price,	Cumberland, "	J F Powell,	Cherry Hill, "
W T Hicks,	Bellefontaine, "	W L Cochran,	Cumberland "
A B Hicks,	" "	L Pugh,	" "
J P Eubanks,	" "	J S Paxton,	" "
J P Wofford,	Cumberland, "	J M Dalton,	Pine Bluff, "
W H Morris,	Concord, "	G L Jennings,	Houston, "
J R Johnson,	Pittsboro, "	J P Thompson,	Lodi, "
E A Crocker,	" "		

LICENTIATES.

C E Murphree, Pittsboro, Miss. | D. E Spencer Hopewell, Miss.
W S Middleton, Cumberland "

LETTER OF CORRESPONDENCE,

OF THE

ZION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

TO HER SISTER

THE.....ASSOCIATION.

SEPT. 18th, 1871.

DEAR BRETHREN.—The thirty sixth annual meeting of our body has just closed a very harmonious and interesting session. We refer you to our minutes and messengers for particulars.—We send as messengers to represent us in your body Brethren.....

Whom we deem worthy representatives.

Hoping to meet your messengers in our next annual Association we subscribe ourselves, yours most affectionately,

G. L. JENNINGS, MODERATOR.

J. P. THOMPSON, Clerk.

ATONEMENT

BY ELDER J. T. FOX.

Atonement means satisfaction. The atonement is satisfaction for sin. It was made by the "son of God." God manifest in the flesh our atoning High Priest is the great mystery of godliness. The riches of this grace will never be fully comprehended in this life. With rapture in heaven we will be ever learning and adoring. The atonement is the foundation upon which our salvation rests, and notwithstanding its mysteries, it is laid with such wisdom and grace that the humblest individual may build his eternal salvation securely upon it.

In entering upon this subject we feel that a volume might be written and its wonders not be told. We propose to give a few thoughts only; arranged under the following divisions.

1st. The satisfaction was rendered to God the moral governor.

2nd. The satisfaction was made by the obedient life and suffering death of the Christ, who of his great mercy voluntarily became our substitute under the moral government.

3rd. The Christ offered as the sacrifice was God's manifest in the flesh. Infinite in the merit, infinite to save.

4th. The sacrifice being infinite in value its saving benefits will be limited only by the designs of Jehova.

1st. The satisfaction was rendered to the moral Governor.

Our exalted Savior "offered himself without spot to God," as satisfaction for sin. The great Moral Governor having due regard for his violated law, his justice, his holiness, his truth in a word for all his holy attributes, accepted the offering, as full and complete. If we personify Justice as many do, and say that the sufferings of Jesus were tendered to it, as satisfaction, we will be forced to conclusions which we cannot admit. The sufferings of Christ are of infinite value, and if justice is satisfied in this sense those for whom He suffered can never be punished. Justice can never have any claims against there. "He is the propitiation for the sins of the world" and if this view of the atonement is correct, justice can never inflict punishment upon any sinner. This is against the whole scriptures.

The offering was made to to the Moral Governor; to whom it was tendered as satisfaction for sin; God accepted it as doing equal honor to Him and his moral government, as if he had executed the sentence of the law upon every sinner in the world. This provision is even above the claims of moral government; for through it we have an "abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom" What it would take to satisfy the Moral Governor was determined in the covenant of redemption; and is revealed to us in the following scriptures: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness—that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Propitiation is that which satisfies; God hath set forth Christ in his obedient life and suffering death as that

which satisfies him in regard to the sins of those who have faith in his blood. When the Son of God came into the world to be the propitiation He said in burnt offerings and offerings for sin thou hadst no pleasure; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will O God. With his expiring breath he said "it is finished."

2nd. The satisfaction was made by the obedient life and suffering death of The Christ, who of his great mercy voluntarily became our substitute under the moral government.

We as free, intelligent and accountable subjects of God's moral government, violated his law, and thereby subjected ourselves to its penalty; which is spiritual, temporal and eternal death. As the result of his great love for a fallen world the Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily became our substitute. I mean by substitute one put in the place of another. He took our place under the moral government to live for us, and die for us.

He was made of a woman made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." He obeyed the law in all its requirements; his obedience was perfect, it was sublime! "He magnified the law and made it honorable." His righteousness being substituted for ours he becomes the "Lord our righteousness," and is made unto us "righteousness" as well as "redemption."—Having brought in everlasting righteousness for us, he offered himself upon the Roman cross as atonement for our sins. The following scriptures describe the substitution of our Savior's sufferings, in the place of ours, under the moral government. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. The chisement of our peace was upon him and by his stripes we are healed. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. Isaiah 53. Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree of the cross. 1 Peter 2, 24.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, Gal. 3 and 16, for he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteous of God in Him. "Not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." But God commendeth his love for us, in that while we were sinners Christ died for us." This substituting dying love has no parallel.

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues
Their Savior's praises speak."

The satisfaction was completed by our Savior's sufferings. No part of it is founded on penances sacraments, or any other dogmas of religionists. Not on faith, repentance or Christian obedience but on the sufferings of Christ alone; "in whom we have redemption through his blood—according to the riches of his grace."

3rd. The Christ offered as the sacrifice was God's manifest in the flesh, infinite in merit, infinite to save.

The sins to be expiated were the sins of the world, the innu-

merable multitude of Adam's lost race. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish." Who is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Who was made a little lower than the angels,—that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." O what a mountain of guilt, what a world of iniquity!

Could the suffering of any finite being be received as satisfaction? Any sacrifice less than that which the Savior offered, would have been a mockery of government. The Son of God only could sustain the load. His almighty arm alone could bring salvation to a guilty world. Nothing but an offering of infinite value would expiate a world's guilt. No being could make such an offering but the eternal infinite, Son of God. The Lamb which atoned for sin was the Lamb of God. Let the following scriptures reveal his exalted nature, and character. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made." "Have I been so long with you and yet hast thou not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I and my Father are one."

Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation; and being found in fashion as a man he humbleth himself, and became obedient unto death: even the death of the cross. Awake O sword against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts, smite the Shepherd. In these scriptures our Savior is called the "Mighty God." The Creator God, The equal of God, God's Fellow, and one with the Father. If these passages do not clearly reveal the Divinity of Christ, I can have no conception of language that could. The scriptures not only establish his Divinity, but his eternal Divinity, is equally clearly taught by them. "And now O Father glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory which I had with Thee before the world was." "And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judea.—Though thou be little among the thousands of Judea, Yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me who shall be ruler of my people Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting. The Savior is revealed as having existed in equal glory with the Father from eternity; before there was any world. And his goings forth are from everlasting.

In the above scriptures he is clearly shown to be the Eternal Divine, Almighty, Redeemer. The uncreated eternal Savior God, humbled himself, and took upon himself our nature without sin; "was made flesh," and was thus prepared, and fully competent, to make an offering of infinite value; which must give full satisfaction to the moral Governor for sin; and harmonize all the attributes of God in the salvation of guilty sinners.

If the Son of God was an infinite being, and offered himself without spot to God as satisfaction, the offering must be sufficient to save infinitely. Were there a thousand worlds to save the atonement is sufficient. The infinite Christ was the offering; His sufferings were the satisfaction. The man of sorrows, The Mighty God, in mysterious union, was the sufferer. The magnitude of his sufferings who can tell. The Jehovah of hosts must measure them, they must equal the demands of God's moral government against a guilty world. All alone the Savior stood to receive the stroke from the omnipotent arm which held the sword which had awoken for Justice against God's "Fellow." It fell upon our adorable substitute. The earth trembled beneath its weight; The veil of the temple was rent in twain, and the mysteries of the priesthood revealed. The adamantine rocks were burst asunder; His agonies drove back the rays of the sun, shrouding the world in darkness. The raging storm of contending wrath awoke the dead, who leaped from their graves to life. Three dreadful hours of Almighty suffering under the load of a world's guilt, completed the sacrifice. Atonement for sin was made; "It is finished." Jesus our Lord died. Are these the circumstances which attend the death of a finite being? O, my brethren, Divinity was in that struggle.

It is frequently said from the pulpit, that when the Savior was nailed to the cross, his divine nature forsook the humanity, and left it to suffer and die. There is nothing of this kind taught in the scriptures. In his expiring moments he said to the thief, This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. His power released the thief from the guilt of sin, who was from that moment an heir of glory. Tell me not that divinity was not there.

If the atonement was made by an infinitely meritorious Savior, there need be no question in regard to its being general or limited. No sinner need fear that it is insufficient for his salvation. "He is the propitiation for the sins of the world." He tasted death for every man. Christ told the Apostles to preach the Gospel to every creature. These with many other passages are inconsistent with the idea of a limited atonement. In its very nature as possessing infinite value, it is sufficient to save infinitely.

It may be asked in what sense is Christ our substitute, and His sufferings accepted by the Governor of the world as satisfaction? Are we to look at it in the light of a commercial transaction? Are we in debt to the Moral Governor? Has Christ assumed our debt and paid the Moral Governor what we owed in this sense? If A holds a note against B for one hundred dollars, and C takes B's place and pays A the amount specified in the note. A has no more claim on B—he is free from obligation—he owes A nothing.

Has Christ paid our debt and is the world free from obligation to the Moral Governor? If so the Moral Governor cannot demand payment of sinners again. Justice would object to a demand for payment after full payment had been made and received.

If this view of substitution and atonement is correct, universal salvation will follow as certainly as that God is just. We have

shown by the scriptures that the Atonement is infinite in value; That the Savior is the "propitiation for the sins of the whole world." If it was offered in payment for the debt of the whole world; the world owes God nothing; it is free from the payment.

This view of the atonement forces us to conclusions at war with the whole bible. He that believeth not shall be damned." These "shall go away into everlasting punishment." "Christ shall be revealed from Heaven in flames of fire taking vengeance on them that know not God." "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord."

Sinners are said in the scriptures to be forgiven. If their debt is paid there is nothing to forgive.

Sin is not a debt. It is the transgression of the law. It is moral evil. It is contempt for the Divine authority. It is insult to God. A poor man in debt, unable to pay, is an object of pity. A sinner is a guilty subject of government, and deserves punishment in proportion to his offense.

"The world is a world of guilty sinners." "They are all gone out of the way." There is not a just man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not," and never has been except Jesus. All men are violators of the law, and "are under the curse." Every principle of justice and moral government demands the punishment of the transgressors of God's law. If the moral governor administers his government upon the literal principles of law and justice; to each transgressor, punishment must be distributed, and upon him it must be inflicted in proportion to his guilt. This would involve the destruction of all mankind. How then can sinners be saved? It saved at all it must be by some arrangement by which the moral governor, his law, and his justice will suffer no dishonor. Add in which a proper regard for moral government will be made apparent to all intelligent creatures. If this can be done the ends of moral government will not only be secured; but the mercy and the grace of the governor will be manifested, his glory thereby increased and the happiness of his guilty creatures secured. This glorious arrangement has been made. Infinite love prompted it, Infinite wisdom devised it, and infinite grace gave it to the world.

To understand it we must not lose sight of the fact that it is a governmental arrangement. It is dealing with sin; with moral evil. The law knows no mercy; it demands punishment at the hands of the guilty.

In the plan of atoning mercy the letter of the law is set aside, while the spirit is more than maintained. It is magnified. In this plan, Christ Jesus the Lord is our substitute. He took upon himself our nature, placed himself under the law; obeyed it perfectly, and suffered its penalty. He lived for us as we ought to have lived, and suffered for us what we deserved to suffer. His righteousness becomes ours, and his sufferings become ours. In other words, the benefits of his righteousness and his death are imputed to us, and the consequences of our sins were imputed to him. Our guilt could not become his. Sin and guilt cannot be transferred from one to the other. The innocent Son of God endured the evils of our sins that we might enjoy the benefits of his innocence. This is what we mean by substitution and atonement. The moral Governor accepted the sufferings of his Son, as doing equal honor to his moral government, as if the evils of sin had fallen upon the guilty. If the spirit of moral government is fully maintained by the substitution of Christ, God, the moral Governor, can forgive the sinner, in harmony with all the claims of his Divine Government. They will suffer no dishonor. The atonement and redemption are entirely distinct from each other. We have redemption, "even the forgiveness of sins," through the atonement. Even God's chosen people are under the law and under the curse; "are by nature the children of wrath, even as others," until they are forgiven. Redemption, pardon, justification, are graces bestowed on us through the atonement, and received in this life.

We now offer an illustration of the fact, that the letter of the law can be set aside, while the spirit is fully maintained. We take it from the writings of Fuller. A King made a law against adultery. The penalty for transgress-

ing it was, that the guilty person should have both of his eyes plucked out. The first person convicted was his own son. The King loved his son, and desired to extend mercy to him. His law and the honor of his government interposed objections. They demanded the execution of the penalty. The following plan was adopted. The King plucked out one of his own eyes, and one of his sons eyes. We must admit, that though mercy was extended to the guilty son, the King nor his government suffered any dishonor. The authority of the realm was maintained, while the guilty was spared. Surely the sufferings of our Savior; the Creator God, as fully maintains the honors of the Divine Government in sparing sinners.

4th. The sacrifice being impute in value, its saving benefits will be limited only by the designs of Jehovah.

God designed by the atonement to open a door of mercy to the world. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth. And the spirit and the bride say come and let him that heareth say come, and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and pardon him."

These passages plainly prove that the atonement has opened a door of mercy to the world.

The Lord designed by the atonement to save all penitent believers; and we believe infants and idiots. "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, and shall not come unto condemnation. The Lord designed by the atonement to save his people. "His name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins."

He designed to save his Church. "Who gave himself for the Church; that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to himself, a glorious Church without a spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

He suffered and died to save his sheep. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. He laid down his life for his sheep." "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

All the persons spoken of in these passages make up the "general assembly and Church of the first born which are written in Heaven." These were designed by the atonement to be saved. These describe the limits to which its saving benefits will be applied. These are not only saved by the atonement, but for them it procures all the riches and glory and happiness and honor which is laid up for them in Heaven.

Finally, it is the purpose of God, through Christ, "To gather together in all things which are in Heaven and which are in earth, even in Him." This final result of our Savior's death is beyond our comprehension. But we believe that by the influence of His death, Heaven and earth will be harmonized.

When the mysteries of the Cross are revealed in Heaven to capacities prepared to receive them, there will be such an exhibition of the riches of His love, in harmony with His holiness and justice as will forever draw his creatures to him and secure them from the possibility of temptation and sin. And thereby, the eternal holiness and happiness of his universe of happy creatures will be secured. These are the limits of its happy results so far as they are presented to our minds in the scriptures. What is beyond, we know not.

It may be asked, if a door of mercy was opened to the world, why are not all saved by the atonement? Because the carnal mind is enmity to God, and sinners will not enter by repentance and faith, but choose to go on in sin. Those sufferings which shook the earth, rent the rocks, and awoke the dead, opened the door of mercy. If sinners will not go in, they have no excuse for caviling. Why did not God save his people? He knew that they were like all others, opposed to entering by the door. To magnify the riches of His grace, the spirit of God brings them in, regenerates their spirits, and makes them willing in the day of his power. Christ, our dying Savior will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

STATISTICAL TABLE.

CHURCHES.	COUNTIES.	POST OFFICE.	PASTORS.	CLERKS.	Time of Meeting.	Baptised	Received by Letter	Restored.	Dismissed by Let.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total Whites.	Colored.	For Minutes.
Antioch.	Chickasaw	Pine Bluff	R W Thompson	A M George	1 23 20	2	2	1	41	1	2	57	57	3 00
Bethany.	Choctaw	Slate Springs	J T Fox	J J Fox	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Bethel.	Calhoun	do	E D Hardin	A T Childers	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Concord.	Montgomery	Caderetta	B W Watson	J M Rogers	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Bluff Springs.	Choctaw	Bellevue	A Price	A Moore	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Fellowship.	do	Bellevue	J T Fox	R J Hopkins	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Friendship.	Calhoun	Cherry Hill	R W Thompson	R J Hopkins	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Friendship.	Choctaw	Cherry Hill	J P Thompson	R Nolen	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Friendship.	Montgomery	Greensboro	T H Wilson	S E Parker	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harmony.	Choctaw	Caderetta	W L Cochran		2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harmony.	Choctaw	Bellevue			2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Montgomery	Lodi	J P Thompson	J R Freeman	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Cumberland	G L Jennings	T N Ross	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Erin	R W Thompson	G W Howard	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Greensboro	B Watson	A H Bays	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Pittsboro	G L Jennings	L F Chastman	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Cherry Hill	C E Marphice		2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Greensboro	A Hicks		2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Pittsboro	C G Bicut	J Rich	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Montpelier	J M Dalton	Z S Bell	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Greensboro	J Wilson	A G Terry	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Pittsboro		J A Craze	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Caderetta	T H Wilson	A T Pittman	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Pittsboro	J R Johnson	J S Ryan	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Wizona	A H Booth	W A Hart	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Grays Port	T H Wilson	W M Ringo	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Erin	G L Jennings	Wm Ellison	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Short Branch	M C Allen	A G Parlor	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Sarapta	J Sanders	H M Berry	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Cherry Hill	E A Crocker	J W Nurf	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Sparta	R W Thompson	H L Ford	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Pittsboro		W R Brasher	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Big Creek	G L Jennings	J C Martin	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Lodi	J H Wilson	J Taylor	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Cumberland	W L Cochran	J F Gardner	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Hopewell	G L Jennings	F M Roberts	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00
Harwell.	Choctaw	Cumberland	W L Cochran	A C Kobb	2 2 3	2	2	1	19	1	2	167	167	1 0 00

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their alleluias to the Lamb, and drag them down to the regions of the damned. But by failing to support the minister we may, to some extent, close the avenues of mercy, and cut off the means of grace, so as to leave thousands of sinners to grovel their way in darkness, until they are lost to Heaven, and their souls are consigned to irretrievable woe and misery. By the preaching of the Gospel, men hear, hearing they believe, believing they are saved. "He that believeth not shall be damned." "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Romans 10, 13, 14. Oh, my brethren! my brethren! have you in this way robbed heaven of precious souls, of priceless jewels? Can any of these crimes be laid to your charge? have you in the presence of the Great God, under the gaze of his allseeing eye, in the light of revelation, with duty staring you in the face, the hopes of heaven before you, the quicksands of time fast crumbling beneath your feet; Oh! have you robbed God? robbed the church? robbed yourselves, your families? robbed the pastor, his family, his creditors? robbed your country, your neighbor? and, Oh! have you robbed heaven to people hell? and that, too, by neglecting to pay the pastor his honest and just dues! Are you like the Jews, cursed with a curse? are your preachers fast passing away? are your churches destitute, or barely have the Gospel preached to them once a month? are they declining in strength and influence? is your country shaken to its very foundation? does the blood of the slain cry out against you? are your crops blighted with blast and mildew? do the drouths and floods destroy and devour your expected supplies? What God said to that people may he not say to you: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house and prove me now herewith saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it," &c. Come up, brethren, to the full discharge of your duty, and with the blessings of God, the church will appear as fair as the moon, as clear as the sun and as terrible as an army with banners.

Oh, God! accompany this effort of thy servant, by thy spirit's power and influence, that good may be accomplished by it. Amen.

G. L. JENNINGS.

MINUTES
OF THE
THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
ZION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

HELD WITH THE
MIDWAY BAPTIST CHURCH,

FROM

October 4th to 6th, inclusive, 1873.

ELD. G. L. JENNINGS, MODERATOR.
ELD. J. P. THOMPSON, CLERK.

MEMPHIS, TENN.:
SOUTHERN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY.
1873.

Mrs. Sallie Kirby

Mrs. J. A. Kirby

ZION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
MEMPHIS, TENN.

1873.

MINUTES.

MIDWAY, CALHOUN COUNTY, MISS.,
Saturday, October 4, 1873.

The Zion Baptist Association convened with the Church of Christ at Midway, on Saturday before the first Sabbath in October, 1873. At 11 o'clock a large and attentive congregation assembled in the house to hear the introductory sermon, preached by the appointee, Eld. B. Watson. Text, 2d Corinthians, 4th chap., 6th verse. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

After an intermission of half an hour the delegates and messengers assembled in the house, the former Moderator and Clerk in their places. An appropriate hymn was sung and prayer offered by the Moderator, Eld. G. L. Jennings.

The annual letters from the churches were presented and read by Eld. W. T. Hicks and Bro. T. N. Ross, and the names of delegates appointed by the churches enrolled, as follows:

Antioch—D. S. Blackwell, F. Norris.

Bethany—J. T. Fox, T. H. Wilson, J. Fox.

Bethel—W. P. Cook, C. Odom, J. Denton.

Bluff Springs—B. Watson, J. N. Watson, J. Murry.

Concord—G. W. Swindal, H. P. Burton.

Double Springs—A. J. Walker, A. Price, J. E. Carson.

County Line—I. W. Berry, W. M. Dalton, W. T. McGuire.

Fellowship—A. B. Hicks, A. Moore.

Friendship—S. Atkinson, Wm. Mitchel, H. H. Griffin.

Greensboro—Letter.

Harmony—T. E. O'Neal.

Fishron—J. W. Shelton, A. H. Cenner.

Hopewell—M. Wilson.

Macedonia—J. L. Jennings, J. A. Killingsworth, J. W. Powel.

- Midway—I. McCollough, M. K. Gilder, G. W. Howard.
 Mt. Comfort—S. Wilkins.
 Milligan Springs—T. N. Lusk.
 Mt. Moriah—B. Davis.
 Mt. Pleasant—S. M. Cole, A. Henly, T. N. Ross.
 Mt. Tabor (Choctaw)—T. M. Levrett.
 Mt. Tabor (Calhoun)—T. A. Braughton, B. Parker, W. J. Parker.
 Mt. Zion—W. A. Ray, G. W. Ray.
 New Liberty—J. T. Dye, William Kilgo.
 Oak Grove—M. V. Reagan.
 Pleasant Grove (Grenada county)—Wm. Baily.
 Pleasant Grove (Chickasaw county)—G. L. Jennings, G. W. Naron, J. Ellison.
 Pleasant Grove (Montgomery county)—J. P. Thompson.
 Pleasant Hill (Calhoun county)—B. F. Dill.
 Pleasant Ridge—E. A. Crocker, W. Winters, J. Sanders.
 Pleasant Hill (Yalobusha county)—J. Martin, J. B. Martin, W. Riley.
 Philadelphia—J. T. Moore.
 Pittsboro—C. G. Blount, J. S. Ryan.
 Poplar Springs—G. W. Murff, J. F. Powel.
 Providence—A. Woodard, J. Patterson.
 Rocky Mount—J. Patterson.
 Shiloh (Calhoun county)—G. Parker, D. C. Martin.
 Shiloh (Montgomery county)—S. L. Ray, R. Wood.
 Spring Creek—W. M. High, W. Ramsey, T. H. Middleton.
 Spring Valley—W. Curry, G. W. Kingcannon.
 Spring Hill—J. Hardin, Eli Hardin, A. Elerson.
 Union—Letter.
 Wakeforest—W. A. Martin, A. P. Woodruff, A. E. Kolb.

On motion, the Association proceeded to the election of officers. The regular method of electing by ballot was suspended, and that of nominations and acclamations adopted; whereupon Eld. G. L. Jennings was re-elected Moderator and Eld. J. P. Thompson, Clerk.

The Moderator, after some appropriate remarks, resumed his seat and declared the body duly organized and ready for business.

Petitionary letters being called for, the following churches, through their delegates and letters, asked for admittance: Mt. Tabor of Calhoun, Mt. Tabor of Choctaw, Pleasant Hill of Yalobusha and County Line of Oktibeha. These churches being found sound

in faith and order were received, and the hand of fellowship extended to their delegates by the Moderator, and their names enrolled as members of this body.

Corresponding messengers were called for, with the following results: From the Aberdeen Association—O. F. Dandy, L. Hill, Eld. R. W. Thompson. Columbus Association—D. J. Cochran.

The following brethren were appointed upon the Preaching Committee: W. Powel, W. P. Cook, A. Henly, with the pastor and deacons of Midway Church.

RETURNED CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Aberdeen Association—Eld. C. G. Blount, J. F. Powel, J. M. Dalton.

To the Louisville Association—Elds. W. T. Hicks, B. Watson, Bro. W. D. Seigler.

To the Columbus Association—Elds. J. M. Dalton, A. B. Hicks, Bros. S. Deloach and W. M. Curry.

To the Yalobusha Association—Elds. E. A. Crocker, T. H. Wilson, Bros. J. E. O'Neal and Wm. Martin.

To the Kosciusko Association—Elds. W. T. Hicks, J. P. Thompson, Bros. T. N. Lusk and A. Terry.

To the Yazoo Association—Elds. T. H. Wilson, J. P. Thompson, Bro. S. L. Ray.

To the State Convention—Elds. J. T. Frost, D. E. Spencer, A. B. Hicks, W. T. Hicks, C. G. Blount, T. H. Wilson, J. P. Thompson, Bro. J. Martin.

The Committee on Preaching made the following report: Eld. Martin to preach to-night, Eld. W. W. Finley to preach on Sabbath at 11 o'clock, J. P. Thompson at 2 P.M., Eld. R. W. Thompson, Sabbath night.

On motion, adjourned to 8 o'clock Monday morning.

Prayer by Eld. W. W. Finley.

After preaching on Saturday night the following committees were read out.

On Order of Business—Elds. C. G. Blount, John Sanders, Bro. J. Fox.

Foreign Missions—Eld. J. T. Fox, B. Watson and Bro. Irvin McCollough.

Domestic Missions—Eld. T. H. Wilson, Bros. A. Woodard, J. H. Ryan.

Orphans Home—Elds. W. T. Hicks, J. F. Power, Bro. S. G. Hunter.

Ministerial Education—Eld. J. L. Jennings, Bros. J. C. Martin, G. W. Howard.

Sabbath Schools—Bros. J. T. Moore, T. B. Campbell, Eld. E. A. Crocker.

Finance—G. W. Naron, T. N. Ross.

Nominations—W. P. Cook, J. Denton, M. Burson.

Publications—Eld. A. B. Hicks, Bros. N. B. Crawford, J. W. Powel.

RETURNED CORRESPONDENCE.

SABBATH EXERCISES.

Prayer meeting at 9 o'clock, conducted by Eld. A. B. Hicks. After the 11 o'clock sermon a collection for Home and Foreign Missions was taken up.

SECOND DAY.

MONDAY MORNING—8 o'clock.

After reading the 138th Psalm, a Hymn was sung and prayer offered by Eld. T. H. Willson.

Visiting brethren were invited to seats.

The Committee on Order of Business offered their report, which was adopted.

The minutes of Saturday were read, and the roll called and corrected.

The report on Foreign Missions was read and adopted, as follows:

Your Committee on Foreign Missions report that the field is everywhere ripe for the harvest. The barriers that have stood for ages against the preaching of a pure gospel, have everywhere, by the providence of God, been removed. Even the man of sin, hoary with age, has been shorn of his strength, and has for the first time, since his rise, no power to persecute to death the ministers of truth. The success that attends the labors of the missionary in foreign lands declare the will of our Father in this respect. With all the accumulated errors and prejudices of ages against them, they baptize nearly twice as many to the preacher as are baptized by our ministers in

this favored land. What are we, as an Association, doing in this cause? Nearly nothing. We, your committee, recommend the following resolution:

Resolved, That every brother who is the head of a family be requested to take and read the Baptist, that he may inform himself in regard to what God is doing in the world. We believe that if the brethren were thus in communication with the moral condition of the nations, they would feel their individual obligation to contribute to the foreign missions cause.

J. T. FOX, Chairman

Report on publications read, amended and adopted, as follows:

Your Committee on Publications would respectfully recommend to the brethren the importance of procuring and reading the Baptist, published at Memphis by Bro. J. R. Graves, in which is a Mississippi Department, ably edited by Bro. Lowrey. Also, the Home and Foreign Journal. We would further recommend to the churches the hymn and tune-book published by Bro. Graves at Memphis.

Respectfully submitted.

A. B. HICKS, Chairman.

Report on Sabbath Schools read and adopted, as follows:

Your Committee on Sabbath Schools would respectfully recommend that the churches procure the childrens' Sabbath School library, which can be bought for a small sum, at Memphis; and that they select some competent member to instruct their children in Sabbath Schools for at least three months during the summer season of the year. We would also recommend that Kind Words be taken in every family.

J. T. MOORE, Chairman.

Report on Orphans' Home read and adopted, as follows:

Your committee to whom was referred the report on Orphans' Home, beg leave to report that there is now about one hundred and ten orphans in the Home, and that they are in a needy condition. Brethren, it is a fact known to every Baptist in this Association and throughout the State, that this is an institution mainly dependent on the Baptists of this State for its support. Brethren, will we sustain it? We must sustain it. It is our interest and privilege and our duty to sustain it. This Home is the noblest monument ever raised by the Baptists of this State, and is destined in the providence of God to be a power in our State for good. We recommend that each pastor and delegate of this body bring its claims before their respective churches, and take immediate action in that direction. Collect funds and forward them to the Home. We would further recommend that each Baptist in this Association contribute one dollar as a permanent fund to furnish the girls with

material to make clothing for market, and thereby make them self-supporting.

Respectfully submitted.

W. T. HICKS, Chairman.

Upon the adoption of the above report a contribution of \$25 20 was made by the Association as a permanent fund to furnish the girls at the Home with material.

The following report on Domestic Missions was read and adopted: Your Committee on Domestic Missions beg leave to report that, owing to the limited time for obtaining information and statistics in regard to the progress and success of Domestic Missions, our report can only be desultory, and confined to the limits of our own State. Your committee is advised that much has been and is yet being accomplished by Bro. L. Ball and others, in that portion of our State known as the Mississippi bottom, and elsewhere, and we offer the following resolution:

Resolved, That in view of the great responsibilities resting on us, and the great interest involved, our brethren be urged to redouble their exertions and sacrifices in the interest of Domestic Missions.

Respectfully submitted.

T. H. WILSON, Chairman.

On motion, the Association adjourned for half an hour.
Prayer by Eld. J. T. Fox.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

At the appointed hour the Association reassembled, and, after singing, proceeded to business.

The following report on Ministerial Education was read and adopted:

Your Committee on Ministerial Education would report the following:

The necessity and importance of ministerial education has claimed the attention of the denomination for years. The demand is still increasing. Much has been said and written on this subject, but too much cannot be said. It is impossible for any one to be too well prepared to teach the doctrine of salvation. Their field is the world; their duty to know nothing save Christ and Him crucified. Brethren, we would call you attention to this subject, asking you to give it your prayerful consideration.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. L. JENNINGS, Chairman.

The following report on nominations was adopted:

Your Committee on Nominations would recommend that Eld. T. H. Wilson preach the Introductory Sermon at the next annual meeting. Eld. M. C. Allen alternate.

Respectfully submitted.

W. P. COOK, Chairman.

REPORT OF DISTRICT MEETINGS.

NORTHERN DISTRICT.

The Northern District meets with the Church at Mt. Comfort, on Thursday before the first Sabbath in August, 1874. To preach the Introductory Sermon, Eld. D. E. Spencer. Eld. J. F. Powel alternate.

ESSAYS.

On the Kingdom of Christ—Eld. D. E. Spencer.

Will there be a General Judgment, including both Saint and Sinner?—Eld. C. G. Blount.

Are Infants in their present state fit Subjects of Heaven, or are they changed in the article of Death?—J. S. Ryan.

On Matthew, chap. 11, verses xi and xii—Eld. E. A. Crocker.

On the Trials of the Christian—Z. J. Ryan.

What becomes of the Soul after Death, until Resurrection?—Eld. G. L. Jennings.

How are Christians the Salt of the Earth and the Light of the World?—T. N. Ross.

How are We to Bear one another's Burdens, and so Fulfill the Law of Christ, when each Man shall Bear his own Burden?—Eld. J. R. Johnson.

Sunday Schools—J. S. Killingsworth.

Christian Experience—G. W. Howard.

Peter's Denial of Christ—J. L. Jennings.

Are any Qualifications Necessary to Entitle one to Commune at the Lord's Table? If so, what are they?—J. L. Lyon.

On Temperance—Eld. J. R. Johnson.

Query. Does Matthew, chap. 18, verse xxxv, teach the renewal of a debt for which the individual has been forgiven?

Delegates to the Southern District—Elds. A. Price, D. E. Spencer, J. F. Powel, C. G. Blount, E. A. Crocker, Bros. T. N. Ross, J. S. Killingsworth.

It was requested that the essay of Eld. J. T. Fox, on Man's Free Agency, be published in the minutes of the Association.

J. S. RYAN, Clerk.

G. L. JENNINGS, Moderator.

SOUTHERN DISTRICT.

The Southern District holds its next meeting with Bethel Church, on Friday before the fourth Sabbath in July 1874. Eld. J. P. Thompson to preach the Introductory Sermon.

The next Association to be held with Bethany Church.

Query to be discussed at the next meeting:

Did Paul Baptize the Twelve Brethren to whom the Holy Ghost was imparted, when he laid his hands upon them at Ephesus?

Bro. Halley Fox to write an essay on Christian Consecration generally.

J. T. MOORE, Clerk.

A. B. HICKS, Moderator.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Received from the Finance Committee for 1872.

For Roman Mission.....	\$64 25
For Foreign Missions.....	3 50
Forwarded to F. M. Board.....	\$67 75
Received for ministerial education.....	\$24 50
Paid to Burns.....	15 00
Balance.....	\$9 50

Orphans' Home.

Received from Finance Committee.....	\$ 0 10
Received from other sources.....	73 90
Paid to T. J. Dupree.....	\$80 00

Home Missions.

Received from Finance Committee, on hand.....	\$ 2 10
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We recommend that another Executive Committee be appointed, and that Bros. S. M. Cole, J. A. Killingsworth, and A. B. Hicks be assisted at school.

The indebtedness of the Executive Board is \$35.00, due R. M. Vance for the board of Bro. A. B. Hicks for 1871.

We recommend that the Executive Committee be empowered to employ a missionary for the Association.

G. L. JENNINGS, Chairman.

The following report from the Finance Committee was adopted:

Received for minutes.....	\$143 15
Received for foreign missions.....	54 20
Received for home missions.....	16 20
Received for Roman mission.....	5 00
Received for Orphans' Home.....	36 85
Received for ministerial education.....	8 00
Received for orphans' permanent fund.....	25 20
Total.....	\$288 60

G. W. NARON, Chairman.

On motion, an Executive Committee was appointed, viz.: J. T. Moore, C. G. Blount, T. H. Wilson, G. W. Howard, J. P. Thompson.

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That the essay of Eld. J. T. Fox, which was read in the District meetings, be published in the minutes.

Resolved, That the following certificate from Mt. Pleasant Church be published in the minutes:

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, CHICKASAW COUNTY.

WHEREAS, Eld. G. L. Jennings having resigned the pastoral care of this Church, for the purpose of removing to Texas, we believe it to be our duty to give an expression of our Association of his services, and commend him to those among whom he may hereafter labor. Bro. Jennings has lived in this country since 1844. He preached his first sermon at our Church some eighteen years ago. He has been our pastor five years. His walk as a Christian, and labors as a minister, have greatly endeared him to us. We regret to lose his services, and part with him in sorrow.

Resolved, That we esteem Bro. Jennings very highly for his works' sake, and are under lasting obligations to him for his faithful services.

Resolved, That we regard him as a good neighbor, a good citizen, a good Christian, a good pastor, and one of our best preachers.

Resolved, That we commend him as such to all unto whom these

presents may come, and pray God that he may be as abundantly useful elsewhere as he has been here.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our minutes, a copy presented to Bro. Jennings, and a copy sent to the Mississippi department of the Baptist for publication, with a request that the Texas Baptist please copy.

Done by order of the Baptist Church of Christ, at Mt. Pleasant, in Conference, Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1873.

A. HENLEY,
S. G. HUNTER, } Committee.
T. N. ROSS,

WHEREAS, Elds. J. L. Jennings and J. F. Powell will shortly move to the State of Texas;

Resolved, That we fully endorse them as ministers, and recommend them to the Christian confidence of our Texas brethren.

WHEREAS, Elder James Martin, of this Association, being in a destitute condition, and for whom a small contribution has been made by this Association;

Resolved, That this Association request the pastors of the Churches in her bounds to lay the matter of the support of this aged brother before their respective congregations, and solicit contributions for the same as early as practicable.

Resolved, That Eld. J. T. Fox be appointed to preach at our next Association, on Sabbath, at 11 o'clock, on the distinctive principles and practices of the Baptists.

Resolved, That the Clerk be allowed \$20.00 for his services, and all expenses arising from superintending the publishing and distributing the minutes.

All of the business having been disposed of, on motion, the Association adjourned to meet with Bethany Church, near Slate Springs, Calhoun county, Mississippi, on Saturday before the first Sabbath in October, 1874, at 10 o'clock A. M.

After prayer and the singing of a hymn, the body was declared adjourned.

J. P. THOMPSON, Clerk.

G. L. JENNINGS, Moderator.

The Executive Board will hold its first meeting with Bethel Church, Saturday before the second Sabbath in March, 1874.

T. J. MOORE, Chairman.

The following is a list of ministers of the Zion Association:

Allen, M. C., Slate Springs, Miss.
 Blount, C. G., Pittsboro, Miss.
 Baker, N., Cumberland, Miss.
 Crocker, E. A., Sarepta, Miss.
 Dalton, J. M., Line Creek, Miss.
 Eubanks, J. P., Bellefontaine, Miss.
 Fox, J. T., Slate Springs, Miss.
 Hardin, E. J., Slate Springs, Miss.
 Hicks, W. T., Greensboro, Miss.
 Hicks, A. B., Bellefontaine, Miss.
 Jennings, G. L., Erin, Miss.
 Jennings, J. L., Pittsboro, Miss.
 Johnson, J. R., Pittsboro, Miss.
 Price, A., Cumberland, Miss.
 Paxton, J. S., Cumberland, Miss.
 Pugh, L., Cumberland, Miss.
 Powel, J. F., Cherry Hill, Miss.
 Sanders, J., Sarepta, Miss.
 Thompson, J. P., Lodi, Miss.
 Watson, B., Bellefontaine, Miss.
 Walker, A. J., Bellefontaine, Miss.
 Wilkins, J., Sarepta, Miss.
 Wilson, T. H., Slate Springs, Miss.
 Wofford, J. P., Cumberland, Miss.
 Middleton, W. C., Cumberland, Miss.
 Martin, James.

The following is the list of licentiates:

Murphre, C. E., Pittsboro, Miss.
 Griffin, J., Sarepta, Miss.
 Cole, S. M., Cumberland, Miss.
 Carson, J. F., Montavista, Miss.
 Eidson, J., Bellefontaine, Miss.
 Killingsworth, J. A., Pittsboro, Miss.
 Berry, H. M., Sarepta, Miss.
 Howel, J., Erin, Miss.
 Peacock, J., Greensboro, Miss.

The following is a list of ministers of the Missions Association:

Allen, M. C., State Springs, Miss.
 Blount, C. G., Pittsburg, Miss.
 Baker, N., Cumberland, Miss.
 Crockett, E. A., Searcy, Miss.
 Dalton, J., Searcy, Miss.
 Hubbard, J., Searcy, Miss.
 Fox, J. T., State Springs, Miss.
 Harrison, E. J., State Springs, Miss.
 Hill, W. T., Greenboro, Miss.

MAN'S FREE AGENCY.

AN ESSAY—BY J. T. FOX.

BELoved BRETHREN—The subject treated in this essay is one about which there is much difference of opinion. It is a task I hardly dare hope to accomplish so to clear it of difficulties as to harmonize all conflicting views. But I think the difference between us chiefly consists in a misunderstanding of each other's terms. Let us, therefore, divest ourselves of all prepossessions, and come earnestly to the examination of the question: "Is Man a Free Agent, and if so, How is it Reconcilable with Salvation by Grace?" A proper understanding of this question will enable us to see the harmony that exists between apparently conflicting passages of Scripture, and place the goodness of God, and the wickedness of man, so before our spiritual eyes that we shall be led more to admire the riches of divine grace, and see more clearly the heinousness of sin. Webster defines the word free, to be at liberty. President Edwards says, the highest sense of freedom of which we can conceive, is to be at liberty to do as we please or choose. Agent, according to Webster, means a deputy. Agency, business performed by an agent—action. If I appoint a man to do a certain thing which is proper and right, to advance my interests, he is an agent in the premises, and is morally bound to do the thing required, and is accountable if he does something else. Yet in his own proper person he has liberty to comply with his moral obligation and merit his reward, or do something else and abide the consequences. In this sense he is a free agent; that is, he has personal liberty to do as he pleases or chooses. It is evident from the Scriptures that God has appointed man to do certain things which are proper and right, to advance His glory and man's happiness, and has plainly laid down those things in His word; and it is further evident that man has personal liberty to comply with his moral obligations and receive a reward, or do something else and abide the result. A free agent, then, is a free actor; one who acts as he pleases or chooses, not being forced to act one way rather than the other. According to the foregoing, man is a free agent. He has personal liberty to obey or disobey God; he is not forced to do either the one nor the other. Free agent and free actor are, therefore, synonymous terms, and in this sense I shall use the term free agent in this paper.

It is objected that man is the subject of law, and is therefore not a free agent. I answer, we are the subjects of civil law, and

yet it is evident that we are free to obey or disobey, and abide the consequences. Mr. Edwards says, the plain and obvious meaning of the words liberty and freedom, is power—opportunity—to do as we please. Now it is most obvious that we obey or disobey the civil law, just as we choose or please under the circumstances. Just so in regard to God's requirements; we act without being forced, in both cases. We have power—opportunity—to obey or disobey, as we please or choose.

It is objected that man is depraved, wickedly inclined; therefore he is not a free agent or actor. If an inclination to be wicked destroys the freedom of our action, it is clear that an inclination to holiness will have the same effect, for an inclination in the one direction would influence our actions just as much as the contrary inclination in the other direction; and if the inclination destroys the freedom of action in the one case, just so in the other. To what absurdities will this objection drive those who entertain it?

First. That God is not a free actor or free agent; for He is not only inclined to holiness, but is the embodiment of all perfection. God has power—opportunity—to do as he pleases, and is infinitely pleased with doing right; not because he is forced, or is not free; but because he is invariably pleased with righteousness—chooses right.

Second. If this objection be well found, the saints in glory are not free agents, do not do as they please or choose; but their praise to the Lamb is all forced.

Third. According to this objector's views, Adam was not a free agent; for in his primeval state he bore the image of God, and of course had a strong inclination to holiness; but, alas, he had power—opportunity—to sin, and, in the full exercise of free agency, he fell.

Fourth. According to this objection, there is not an intelligent being in heaven or earth that is a free agent or actor, but all are mere machines, moved on in their particular course by some irresistible and irresponsible power, for all are inclined either to sin or holiness; there are none the subjects of entire indifference, and if we could conceive of such beings, even they would be sinful. Indifference to right and wrong is certainly sinful.

There is one truth that is not denied, that man is an actor; his actions are therefore free or voluntary, or they are forced. If his actions are free or voluntary, he is a free agent; if they are forced, he is not. If the latter be true, he cannot be held accountable. No sane man would hold any being accountable for doing a thing which he was forced to do by irresistible power, or for not doing a thing when prevented by irresistible power. In such a case, the cause of the action would be accountable, and not the actor. If Adam was forced by Satan to sin, Satan alone was accountable. But Adam acted from choice, and so did Satan; therefore both were accountable, and both received the curse.

Worthink it true that free moral agency is essential to accountability. Some would admit the truth of moral agency, but deny

free agency. If we examine the subject carefully, we shall see that both are essential and true. Mr. Edwards says: "A moral agent is a being that is capable of those actions that have a moral quality, and that can properly be denominated good or evil. To moral agency belongs a sense of moral good or evil; or of such a thing as desert or worthiness, praise or blame, reward or punishment; and a capacity which an agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements, or motives exhibited to the view of the understanding and reason, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty." All these things are true in regard to man; he is capable of those actions that are virtuous or vicious; he has a sense of moral good or evil, praise or blame, rewards and punishments; and he has a capacity capable of being influenced by motives exhibited to the view of the understanding and reason, and is, therefore, a moral agent.

It clearly appears from what has been said, that man possesses all that is essential to free moral agency, and is justly held to a strict accountability for his actions.

That man is a free agent will further appear from the following considerations:

First. If free agency is essential to human accountability, then it is true that man is a free agent. For, that man is accountable, the word of God teaches in unmistakable language: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in his body, whether they be good or whether they be bad." "Each one must give account of himself to God." "He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness."

Second. That man is a free agent, or is at liberty to act as he pleases, which is the same thing, appears from the fact that God requires him to do certain things, and holds him accountable for not doing them, even though he is depraved. "And now what does the Lord require of thee but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength." "Thou shalt not bear false witness." "Take ye the Lord while He may be found." "Repent ye and believe the gospel." For God to command and require men to do things upon the supposition that he is not a free agent, or was forced to disobey, or was not in any sense able to obey; or, still in other words, had not the power—opportunity—to obey, would be to mock his helplessness, and to punish his failure would be repugnant to every sense of justice.

Would any just man command, require, his son who was prostrated by fever, who had neither plow nor horse, to go and plow a certain piece of land, and punish his failure? Such conduct on the part of the parent would be not more repugnant to common sense and justice than the Lord's requirements if man is not a free agent, or is not at liberty to obey or disobey as he chooses, or has not the power—opportunity—to obey or disobey.

It is said that Adam was our federal head, and we lost our ability by his sin; and therefore we are under obligations to obey, though we have not the ability—opportunity—to obey or disobey. That Adam was our federal head in a certain sense is true, but that he was our federal head in this sense is not true; for the commands of the gospel are given to us in our fallen state, and are binding upon fallen creatures; and to be binding on fallen creatures, they must be free to obey or disobey; and they could not be thus free unless they had ability—opportunity—to obey or disobey as they chose. Though we had destroyed our strength—opportunity—ourselves, we could not be required to obey a command that we were in every sense unable to obey. The man who, by drunkenness or otherwise, destroys his reason entirely, and becomes permanently insane, is a fit subject for the asylum, and is not responsible to any law, nor the subject of law, or commands. That we are totally depraved, inclined to sin by the fall, is a plain demonstrable fact, but that inclination to sin constitutes inability, properly speaking, or destroys freedom of action, is not true. We choose sin because we love it, are inclined to it, not because we are not free. The drunkard chooses his cups because he loves them, not because he is not free to let them alone.

Third. That motives are presented to our reason in the gospel to induce men to comply with its requirements, proves that they are free agents, or that they have power—opportunity—to obey or disobey, as they may choose, without which they could not be the subjects of praise or blame, reward or punishment. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." Salvation is the reward of obedience, and damnation the punishment for disobedience. "Repent ye and believe the gospel, that your sins may be blotted out." The blotting out of all sins is here the inducement to the exercise of faith. "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Everlasting life in heaven; eternal death in hell! What motives! None stronger could be presented to move man to obedience. "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." I ask where is the reason, in presenting these motives to man, and persuading them and praying them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, if they have not the power—opportunity—to obey. It would seem to be the climax of absurdity and mockery. If men are inclined to sin, and disinclined to do right, and this perverse inclination is the cause of their disobedience, we can see the propriety and goodness of God in persuading them by motives and arguments. But if they are without strength—opportunity—to obey, and this is the cause of disobedience, we can see neither propriety nor love in the procedure.

Fourth. The Lord addresses man as a free agent, or as possessing power—opportunity—to do as he pleases. "Choose ye this day whom you will serve. If the Lord be God, follow Him; and if

Baal, follow him." "Behold, I set before you life and death, cursing and blessing." Is it consistent with infinite wisdom and love to make such propositions to a being who has not the power—opportunity—of choosing his course? Surely not.

Fifth. That man is a free agent, is manifest from the fact that God rewards him for his obedience and punishes him for his disobedience. "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Is a man the subject of praise and reward who is forced to obey? But we see that the Lord praises and rewards the faithful servant. "Depart ye cursed into everlasting punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye ministered not unto me, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." All these things are commands of the Lord. And because these persons neglected obedience, they were assigned their dreadful state. Could these persons be thus blamed and punished if they had not freely chosen their course in this life? In regard to gospel-requirements especially, it is said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "The unbelieving shall have their portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone." Would the just and blessed Lord thus punish his creatures for not doing the things contained in the above scriptures, and assign their not doing them as the reason for their punishment, if they were not free in their actions and had not the ability—opportunity—to do them? We think not; but if the reason why they neglected them was because they preferred something else, and therefore chose that something else, all seems to be plain and just. Having shown conclusively, as we think, that man is a free agent, we shall now answer objections based upon apparently conflicting passages of Scripture. The word of God is not in conflict with itself. Neither is any proposition true that is in conflict with the sacred word. That position can only be correct which is in harmony with the blessed word of God.

Objection 1st. The Scriptures declare that man is dead in trespasses and sins. Now, it is most evident that a dead man is not a free agent or actor—is not an actor at all. This objection takes it for granted that this passage is to be construed literally, when in fact it contains a figure which is used for illustration. If the objector's construction of this passage is correct, he has gained his point. But is this passage to be construed literally? If so, it is inconsistent with and contradicts all those passages which we have quoted, wherein man is commanded to do or not do. A dead man is not the subject of commands or requirements. That this is not the Apostle's meaning is clear, if we examine the connection. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, (surely trespasses and sins imply life and action,) wherein in time past ye

walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation in time past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us when we were dead in sins, quickened us, or made us alive from that death in sin. In this dead state men walk, they converse, have desires of the flesh and of the mind—are the subjects of Satanic influence—are children of wrath, even as others. Do dead men walk, lust, desire, converse? Surely not. We see, therefore, that the true interpretation of this passage is not a literal one, for these men were alive and terribly active. What, then, does the passage mean? Certainly it means that men by nature are totally inclined to evil, and have no love nor desire of heart for that which is holy, and are even as destitute of the sincere love of God and holiness as the man who is literally dead; hence the figure of death fitly illustrates his moral condition. "Dead in trespasses and sins," not incapable of acting as he chooses, for this he does. The quickening, therefore, is to bring to life from this state of moral death and sin, to the exercise of love to God and holiness by changing the heart, which is the work of the Holy Spirit. It will therefore be seen that this prevailing love for, and inclination to sin, and entire absence of the love of holiness, is that which is called a death in trespasses and sins. This meaning of the passage is entirely consistent with free agency, for a man may be ever so wickedly inclined and, still have power—opportunity—to act differently, or may do as he pleases or chooses. A man may be so miserly that he is dead to every feeling of benevolence; but if he has money, and the poor around him, he has the power—opportunity—to relieve their wants, and God certainly requires him to do it; and as he has the power—opportunity—to obey God, he is a free agent; and though his selfishness may certainly influence him to disobey the claims of benevolence and the voice of God, yet he does as he pleases or chooses in disobeying, for he chooses to hoard his money. Just so with fallen man in regard to every command of God.

Objection 2d. This question is asked in the Scriptures: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then may ye that are accustomed to do evil learn to do well. We freely admit that for an Ethiopian to change his skin or a leopard his spots is a natural and physical impossibility. But the Scriptures expressly command sinners to cease to do evil and learn to do well." If the inability of the Ethiopian and leopard is in all respects the same as that of the sinner, can he be required to obey? Can it be his duty? If he were perfectly desirous and fully inclined to obey, he could not, for he has not the ability—opportunity—if the cases are the same. But certainly, the cases are different. There is sufficient sin to justify the use of the figure, but it was never intended

should literally apply the inability of the negro and leopard to the sinner. The inability under which the sinner labors is a prevailing disposition to, and love of sin. A disposition to do evil, and the absence of a disposition to do well, does not destroy free agency, for man may have these, and yet have power—opportunity—to do well. He only lacks the inclination to do well. This lack of inclination to do well, and an inclination to do wrong, is his inability, and the great difficulty under which the fall has placed him. This wicked inclination to rebel, and disinclination to obedience, constitutes what is called moral inability to do right. But the term inability is to be understood in its improper or figurative sense. Not as implying want of power—opportunity—to do right, but as implying a wicked disposition, the absence of the love of right. The depraved human heart is just as certain not to turn to righteousness as that the color of the Ethiopian and leopard will remain the same. This is the truth taught in this passage. We think this view of the passage harmonizes with the commands. A disposition to do wrong, be it ever so strong, or an indisposition to do right, is not inconsistent with our obligation to obey God. If obligation ceases when men become inclined to wrong, then all men are released from obligation to obey, and sin brings liberty instead of bondage; and the more wickedly men are inclined, the greater their freedom. This is in conflict with the whole Bible, and with common sense.

Objection 3d. The blessed Redeemer said, "No man can come to me except by the Father, which hath sent me to draw him." And yet the dear Savior, sitting upon the throne of mercy, erected upon his own sufferings, said: "Come unto me and I will give you rest." "And the Spirit and the bride say come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," which flows from his wounds. Does this sacred text conflict with the free agency of man and destroy his obligation to obey the gospel? Surely not. If there is one obligation to obey stronger than all others, it is the obligation to come to the suffering Savior and be by him saved. God's authority, the Savior's suffering love, our eternal happiness, all combine to increase our obligation to obey the blessed Jesus in this command. To disobey is that sin which consigns the unbeliever to the deepest woe. Let us not entertain a proposition, the legitimate consequences of which arraign justice for the destruction of the gospel rejector. To solve this difficulty and harmonize these two classes of Scripture, we must have recourse to the oft repeated distinction between natural and moral inability. If man is naturally unable to come to Christ, he cannot be required to come. The idiot cannot be required to come to Christ, because he is naturally unable to understand the command. The man whose limbs have become paralyzed, or who has lost his limbs even by his own fault, or by any other means, cannot be required to walk—he is naturally unable to walk. If the sinner's inability is of this nature, he cannot

be required to come to Christ. A command or invitation to come would be mockery. But the Savior does command and invite sinners to come to him. The dying Savior does not mock men. What does the Savior mean, then, by the sinner's inability to come to him? We think he clearly means that the heart of men is enmity against him; that they hate him without a cause, and that they love sin, and are ever under a prevailing inclination to go away from him, and will not, and therefore cannot, come to him without the Father draw them. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Men are going from Christ, following their evil inclinations, and will forever go that way unless they are drawn by the Father. A man cannot travel in opposite directions at the same time. Man is free to come; nothing hinders but inclination to go the other way; he acts from inclination and choice, and is therefore a free actor. He is not compelled by some dark decree to go on in sin, and invited at the same time to come to Christ. It cannot be.

I do not say that man ever obeys the gospel, or any other command of God, unless his vile heart is changed. The Pharisees obeyed the letter of the law, but not the spirit, for they were a generation of vipers in heart. But I maintain that man is continually inclined to, and chooses to, disobey. And as he chooses freely, acts as he pleases, and is not forced, he is a free agent, and labors under no inability but this wicked inclination—this love of evil. Evil disposition does not excuse, for if it does, all sinners, yea, even Satan himself, must be excused. This evil disposition is all the inability, is all the impossibility, is all the cannot's that pertain to man's fallen state. His inability, therefore, instead of destroying his obligation to obey God, or his accountability, or his free agency, is the foundation of his guilt—the essence of his sin.

Objection 4th. The free agency of man is inconsistent with the doctrine of election and salvation by grace. The doctrine of election is certainly a Bible doctrine. God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; "predestinated to the adoption of children; elected according to the foreknowledge of God the Father unto obedience." "From the beginning they were chosen unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." "They are saved and called not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began." If free agency is inconsistent with this Scriptural truth, free agency must be given up, and we must yield to this objector; but we think there is no inconsistency here. Let us see: A free agent is one that acts from choice, or as he pleases. Man, in regard to God's requirements in the gospel, acts from choice, or as he pleases. This has been abundantly shown. The gospel comes to him as light shining in a dark place, and man being inclined to evil "loves darkness rather than light." "He will not come to the light lest his deeds should be reprov'd." "He will not have the man Christ Jesus to

reign over him." "He puts these things far from him, and counts himself unworthy of eternal life." "He will not come to Jesus that he might have life." "He is a hater of God, spiteful, proud, yea, his very heart is enmity to God." All these Scriptures, with many others, declare man to be under an ever-prevailing evil inclination, and represent him as following from choice, uncompeled, a course of rebellion against the authority and goodness of God. In the full exercise of unrestrained liberty, in the full exercise of all that constitutes him a free moral agent, he perverts his liberty and all his powers in effecting his own ruin. "O, Israel; thou hast ruined thyself, but in me is thy help," is the language of God in truth and mercy, applicable to all nations and all people. Thus we see man free, acting from choice, but ever choosing that course which leads to death! How then do any become the servants of God? How are any brought to accept that deliverance which the gospel brings to the ruined sinner? The word of God gives the answer and solves the question: "They are born of the spirit of God. Born not of the flesh, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." "Born not of corruptible seed, but by the precious word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." By God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works." A new covenant is made with them. "God in goodness writes His law in their hearts and imprints it in their minds, and they are brought to be a willing people in the day of the Lord's gracious power." The above Scriptures teach most unequivocally that the change in man's heart, by which he becomes a believer in Jesus, and a willing servant of the living God, is wrought by His Holy Spirit. It is certain that this change of heart is not wrought in all men, for all are not the servants of God. If this change of evil disposition of heart is produced by the Holy Spirit, as we have proved, God certainly determined before to produce this change; and further, if this change is only wrought in the hearts of certain persons, the Lord must have known those persons from eternity; and also from eternity he must have purposed in himself to graciously change the evil dispositions of these persons. The design that God had in producing this change in this people was, as declared in His word, "that they might be holy, and without blame before Him in love." This purpose to change the hearts of His people, is the election of grace. It is clear, then, that instead of free agency being inconsistent with the election of grace, this precious part of the plan of salvation comes in to secure the deliverance of the free agent who has ruined himself by abusing his liberty and his strength, and by prostituting them to the service of evil.

What, then, is this new birth, this new creation? Certainly it is not the impartation of new powers—opportunities. They are no stronger; these opportunities to love God and obey the gospel are not increased. The Lord of his goodness and mercy changes their hearts so that they love instead of hate Him; from choice obey the

gospel—freely and willingly follow their Savior. Their evil inclination is to a certain extent taken away, and an inclination to holiness takes the place of the evil one; and ere long this gracious work of the Spirit of God will completely transform His people into His divine likeness.

Is man a free agent after this moral change is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit? He has the same powers—opportunities—which constitute free agency; no more nor less. Only his disposition, his inclination is changed; and of choice he freely exercises himself in love, repentance, faith and obedience, with pleasure and joy. The Savior said, "I will make a new covenant with my people in these days. I will write my law in their hearts, and imprint it on their minds, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power."

I now submit to your consideration whether it is not true that sin is more heinous from this view of the subject. If we are at liberty to do as we please, and our evil heart is all that increases our perpetual wickedness, and we but follow out our own choice, tastes and desires in all the sins that we commit, and are not in any manner compelled by any power other than our own evil choice, are not our sins exceedingly sinful? And if we destroy ourselves willfully and of choice, in the full exercise of the largest liberty, does not the grace which changes our wicked dispositions, draw us to Jesus, and make us willing, in the day of his merciful power, appear exceedingly great. We yield, by dying love compelled. We are free agents, free actors. We destroy ourselves and abuse our liberty. Our help is in the Savior only, who loved, died, arose, reigns, regenerates by His spirit, sanctifies, is the author and finisher of our faith, and our eternal righteousness.

If it be true, as God says, that we ruin ourselves in the full exercise of liberty or free agency, God certainly knew that we would do this from all eternity. And if He determined from eternity to take out of this self-ruined world a people which should be to the praise of the glory of His grace, where is the inconsistency between free agency and the election of grace? Surely it is clear that our abuse of our free agency lays the foundation in necessity for the election of grace; and it is equally clear that none would be saved without it. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

By your request, brethren, I have, as best I could, endeavored to set this subject before you. It is imperfectly done, I know. The word of God is perfect. Measure what I have said by that unerring standard.

Your brother in the hope of eternal life,

J. T. COX.

